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dance umbrella performances celebrate 20 years of growing

Charlottetown – Peggy Reddin believes that dance is a life long passion. She has spent the past 20 years living that belief as the co-founder of dance umbrella. She has watched the company grow from 50 students in its first year to 390 students 20 years later.

Dance umbrella celebrates its 20th anniversary this spring with a studio viewing April 11 at The Mack and two performances April 26 on the Confederation Centre of the Arts Mainstage.

"Our theme of 20 Years of Growing reflects the nurturing attitude we strive for," Reddin says. "We have students from ages three to adult. We teach the preschoolers about group dynamics. They learn how to work together, and they learn about the studio. We start them there and get more technical as they grow older."

"For adult dancers, we focus more on a health and wellness program than performances. But we are unique in that we integrate interested adults into the student program," she explains. "They set a good example for the students that dance is not something you do until grade 12 and then quit. Dance is part of your life."

Reddin founded the dance company with Julia Sauvé. It was incorporated into the youth education program at the Confederation Centre of the Arts in 2005 with Reddin as its director. Sauvé continues to be one of the teachers.

The annual performances take place on the Mainstage April 26 with a matinee at 2:30 p.m. featuring the junior school and selected pieces that the senior students choreographed themselves. The 7:30 p.m. performance features the senior school. On April 11 at 7:30 p.m. there will be a studio viewing at The Mack theatre featuring the student choreographies and works by the performance group.

Admission for the April 11 show is on a 'pay what you can' basis at the door. Tickets for the April 26 performances are \$8 for the matinee and \$10 for the evening performance or \$14 for both. Tickets are available at the Box Office.

The dance umbrella program is supported by RBC Financial through the RBC Foundation.

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